

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECRET

COUNTRY Hungary
SUBJECT Censorship

REPORT

DATE DISTR. 26 May 1954

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REQUIREMENT

REFERENCES

25X1 DATE OF INFO.

PLACE ACQUIRED

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- At three different post offices in Budapest some 50-60 officers of the political police are censoring letters. Postal employees have no access to these censorship departments. Mail bags are being delayed four to five days. Letters are inspected at random, either by holding them against the light or by opening them under steam. Opened letters are inspected under a viewer to detect writing done with invisible ink between the lines. Many letters are heated by treating them with a flat iron. Blank spaces, like margins, are treated with an unknown developer which leaves a red mark. This red mark can be removed with a second chemical; both chemicals are applied with a brush.
- Whenever somebody wishes to mail a letter to a foreign destination from a point outside of Budapest, he has to deliver the letter in person to the post office. An officer of the intelligence asks the writer of the letter to give some data about the addressee. If it seems plausible that the correspondence is carried on for business or family reasons, the possibility of using this address as a cover for the collection of intelligence is studied. If this is not feasible, the writer is instructed to inquire in his next letter concerning so-and-so's present whereabouts. If the use of the address is feasible, it is made available to the Communist Party. In either case, the letter-writer and his family are registered. For people coming from the former middle class, such registration may have unpleasant results and they usually prefer not to carry on any foreign correspondence.
- Local telephone calls outside of Budapest are intercepted only at random, but special censors are assigned to every exchange for continuous surveillance of telephone calls between towns.
- In Budapest, all telephone calls are being intercepted by officers of the political police in civilian clothes, stationed at the following telephone exchanges: József, Lipot, Erzsébet, Krisztina, and Belváros. Each switchboard is equipped

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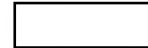
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with a "magnetofon", a device manufactured in Leipzig, East Germany, which records conversations. Surveillance is very thorough; whenever an officer is called away, he puts the recording device into operation by pushing a button.

5. The telegram traffic with other countries is thoroughly monitored by the Party, the political police, and the intelligence service.
6. In the domestic money-transfer system, both sender and addressee have to declare the origin and ownership of the remittance to the postal employee in charge (similarly as in the case of letters to foreign destinations).
7. On letters and even postal cards in domestic mails, both name and address of the sender must be given; the addressee is responsible for the contents, too.

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